

6. New Claims

New claims 51 and 52 are added to specifically recite the aspect of the applicants' invention in which the reactive halide composition comprises SiF_4 and Si_2F_6 , respectively.

New claim 53 is added to specifically recite the aspect of the applicants' invention in which the steps of filling and evacuating are sequentially repeated to effect removal of the noble metal residue from the microelectronic device structure.

New claim 54 is added to specifically recite the aspect of the applicants' invention in which the noble metal residue comprises at least one metal selected from the group consisting of platinum, palladium, iridium and rhodium.

New claims 55-56 have been added to recite the aspect of the present invention that is fully commensurate with the Examiner's reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter.¹⁵

7. Fees Payable

The entry of this amendment will result in a total of 3 new independent claims (\$39.00 each) and 3 new dependent claims (\$9.00 each) beyond the number of claims for which a fee has previously been paid. Accordingly a fee of \$144.00 is due, and a check for this amount is submitted herewith. Please charge any deficiency in payment, and credit any excess payment, to Deposit Account No. 08-3284 of Intellectual Property/Technology Law.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing arguments and amendments, it is clear that claims 1-49 and 51-56 now pending in the application embody novel and nonobvious subject matter and are in form and condition for allowance. In the event that any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (919) 419-9350 to discuss their resolution.

¹⁵ October 8, 1999 Office Action, paragraph 21.

Respectfully submitted,



William A. Barrett
Registration No. 42,296
Attorney for Applicants

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY/
TECHNOLOGY LAW
P.O. Box 14329
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Telephone: (919) 419-9350
Fax: (919) 419-9354
Attorney Ref: 2771-272